

Washington, D.C. Congressman Sanford Bishop, Representative of Georgia's Second Congressional District, today voted in favor of the HOPE VI Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2007 which will revitalize distressed community housing through an \$800 million-per-year investment over the next eight years. Since HOPE VI's inception in 1992, every government dollar has leveraged at least two private sector dollars and has helped transform and revitalize 237 communities across the country.

"We have had resounding success with the HOPE VI program in Georgia's Second Congressional District," said Congressman Bishop. "The program is much more than just 'bricks and mortar.' By engaging a range of private and public sector entities within the community, HOPE VI grants play a vital role in improving housing and bringing increased opportunities in job training, employment, and education."

The Housing Authority of Columbus was awarded a \$20 million HOPE VI grant in 2002 to revitalize 510 units of severely distressed public housing units. Out of the project emerged Ashley Station, a new mixed-income community that also brought new parks, new retail outlets, and street improvements to the community.

Each year since 2003, President Bush has removed HOPE VI from his budget and Congress has restored its funding. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Congressman Bishop consistently has advocated to restore and increase funds to the HOPE VI program.

In addition to reauthorization of HOPE VI, the bill makes significant improvements to the program to ensure its longevity such as requiring full replacement for lost units, increasing involvement of residents in planning the redevelopment, and mandating compliance with green building standards.

The bill must now be taken up by the Senate.